Request 2: Training and Qualification Requirements for Operational Control Personnel

Status Quo
NPA: no change to EU-OPS, i.e. no license requirement for operational control personnel, in particular for the Flight Operations Officer/Dispatcher.

Proposal by EUFALDA

1. Introduction of a licensing requirement: All Operational Control Personnel shall be required to be trained and qualified. The Pilot-in-Command is deemed as being a qualified person by being a pilot.
2. Introduction of a flight-watch

Proposed Text
OR.OPS.100.AOC Operator Responsibilities
(b) The operator's system for exercising operational control and supervision shall include a pro-active flight watch and licensed Flight Operations Officers.

GM OR.OPS.100.AOCGEN(b) Operator responsibilities
OPERATIONAL CONTROL
1 Operational control means the exercise by the operator's operational control personnel, in the interest of safety, of responsibility for the initiation, continuation, termination or diversion of a flight.
2 This does not imply a requirement for licensed flight dispatchers or flight operations officers and for a full pro-active flight watch system.
A pro-active flight watch system is an aircraft situation display (ASD) providing actual and real-time information on the flight, including: altitude, fuel information, actual flight path compared to planned flight path, weather, air space limitations, and allowing permanent two-way communication between operational control personnel and flight crew.
3 If an operator employs Flight Operations Officers in conjunction with a method of operational control, Since flight crew should not self-dispatch, training for these operational control personnel other than the Pilot-in-Command should be based on relevant parts of ICAO Doc 7192 D3. This training should be described in the operations manual.

Justification
A (pro-)active role of all operational control personnel assumes that such personnel is properly qualified and has access to real-time flight data.

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1. Safety	Safety improvements are expected:
	• better operational information to flight crew
	• superior operational decision-making
	• optimum results in flight operations
	• reduction of fatigue for flight crews.
	Several accidents suggest that a higher involvement of dispatchers in the decision-making process might have prevented or mitigated the catastrophic outcome. Such accidents and incidents include:
	• Maersk Air B737 Birmingham, UK-Copenhagen, DK, 12/1999 Encountered Severe WX, Outdated Info at Flight Deck, DEST and ALT closed, Fuel Emergency landing in Billund, DK, 70Kt. Winds. No Flight Watch.
	• Hapag-Lloyd A310, Crete to Hannover, 7/2000 Landing gear failed to retract, crew continued, incorrect fuel estimate, passed a number of suitable airports, fuel exhaustion while attempting to land at Vienna, aircraft destroyed.
	• Swiss SAAB 2000 Basel to Hamburg, 7/2002 Encountered Severe WX, DEST and ALT closed, Fuel Exhaustion, attempted landing at closed airport at night, Werneuchen, Berlin. A/C was vectored directly into severe WX by ATC. Aircraft destroyed. No ACARS.
	• BMI Airbus A321, Over Germany,5/2003 Encountered severe WX/hail. Serious damage. Flight crew had turned off the WX radar. The flight then continued on for hundreds of kilometres past a number of suitable airports in spite of serious damage.
	• EASY JET B737 Near Geneva, Switzerland, 8/2003. Encountered severe hail, significant damage, returned to Geneva.
	• SAS Airbus A330 Chicago-O'Hare- Stockholm, Swed., 10/2003. Continued with no holding fuel into low visibility approach, did missed approach, insufficient fuel to ALT, diverted to Helsinki with fuel emergency. Flight crew did not monitor fuel consumption or weather during flight.
	• 7BA B747-400 Los Angeles-London Heathrow, 2/2005. #2 engine surge after T/O. Flight continued for 11 hours with 3 engines. Crew perceived fuel problem, landed Manchester. It was not necessary to continue in degraded condition.
	• BA A319 London Heathrow-Budapest, Hungary, 10/2005 During climb, at night, close to LHR, major electrical fault, with 5 of 6 screens dark in cockpit. Crew unable to declare mayday, radio failure. After restoring partial function, flight continued to Budapest.
	• Pulkovo Airlines, TU-154 over Ukraine, 8/2006. Flight was trying to avoid severe thunderstorm by going over the tops and apparently exceeded aerodynamic (buffet) limits, entered flat spin and crashed, killing all

	aboard.
	
	 Comment:
	 1. Crews continued into severe weather or with significantly degraded aircraft in spite of safer alternatives. 2 factors stand out:
	
	     a. A lack of up to date, accurate, safety information to the flight crew.
	     b. Poor judgment.
	 2. Flight Crews are under more pressure than ever, especially if one considers shorter turn times.
	 4. Many European Carriers only depend on ATC for information en-route, but ATC focuses on traffic separation, and does not have the requisite knowledge or capability for proper operational support to flights.
	 5. A number of European carriers issue flight plans at the beginning of the day and do not update for changed conditions, unless the crew specifically requests it.
	
	 Higher qualification of individuals leads to a higher likelihood of the individual disrupting a chain of errors leading to an accident Licensed FOO is accountable not only to employer, but also to the competent authority and the public.
	
	 One more system component leading to organisational robustness is being re-enforced and is expected to result into a more robust and safe organisation.
	
	 By integrating all operational control personnel while the flight is being conducted, a considerable additional resource is being added in-flight for the handling of the flight and emergencies.

2. Cost	- for some operators increased training costs - for some competent authorities, increased certification cost - Fuel savings and even less duty hours for flight crew
3. Social	- recognition of profession of ground based operational control personnel - free movement of Labour within made possible - stronger position of Flight Operations Officer (FOO)
4. Environment	Optimum flight plans, reduced emissions
5. Fairness	would create a level playing field between operators in various EU-MS.
6. Harmonization	- In Europe some states already require a FOO-license. Introducing a license requirement for all of Europe means harmonizing with the top-tier and creates a unique standard in Europe - At least 15 countries in EU. with Licensed FOO's and 7 Countries with Airline Certificates. Why downgrade the whole E.U. for standardizing reasons, instead of doing an upgrade?
7. ICAO Alignment	- ICAO Annex 1 and 6 compliant - Licensing implies that all topics required all studied

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